

EXPLORING A RIVER

The Niger, the Mystery of Africa, Was Long a Puzzle.

SOLVED IN A CURIOUS WAY.

Two "Armchair" Scientists, Who Never Set Foot in the Dark Continent, Worked Out the Problem of Where the Great Stream Entered the Sea.

The Niger is the third greatest river in Africa and the eleventh in rank in the world. A century ago nobody had found where the Niger river reached the sea, and as the mystery grew the theory became popular that the Congo or Zaire river was the lower part of the Niger.

The most impressive fact known about the Congo was that the majestic flood it poured into the Atlantic freshened the sea several miles from the shore. It certainly was a great river.

Mungo Park, the splendid and intrepid young Scotchman who inaugurated the modern era of African exploration, was largely responsible for the theory that the Congo might be the outlet of the Niger. He was enthusiastic over the idea. He wrote that if the theory turned out to be true the fact, in a commercial sense, would be second in importance only to the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope.

The German geographer Reichard became interested in the problem of the Niger, and, gathering all data available with regard to the waters in the equatorial regions of West Africa, he came to the conclusion that the Niger must find its way to the ocean through the streams of a delta and that this delta was probably on the coast of the bight of Benin, where a large number of small streams were known to enter the Atlantic.

The eminent geographer hit the nail on the head. His theory told the truth. The problem was solved in an armchair, but the English gentlemen, who at that time were organizing the Tuckey (Kongo) expedition, laughed to scorn the German hypothesis, declared that Reichard's deductions were "entirely to very little attention" and that his data were "wholly gratuitous."

James McQueen was another armchair investigator, but the books he read were hundreds of black slaves taken to the West Indies from the Niger river region. He had read Mungo Park's fascinating story of his journey down the Niger for hundreds of miles and thought it very strange that no explorer had ever found where the great river reached the sea. McQueen began to question every native of the lower Niger he could find and kept accumulating this testimony for five years before he was ready to publish his results.

In 1821, when he had solved the puzzle to his satisfaction, he issued a book in which he announced as a fact and not as a theory that the Niger reached the sea through a wide spreading delta in the region of the "oil rivers." As a fact, the delta front is exactly where McQueen said it was. The oil rivers are the delta streams of the Niger.

McQueen's book made more fun for the learned geographers than any comic newspaper. The idea that an obscure trader in the West Indies should dream that his confabs with ignorant slaves had solved the Niger mystery was a most amusing joke. McQueen lived to see the day when his joke was recognized as a solemn geographical fact.

The Niger delta, one of the largest in the world, stretches 250 miles along the coast. Most of its streams are small, and, skirting the coast, one can hardly observe them, so completely are they hidden in the dense region of mangrove swamps. Explorers soon found that they might struggle for weeks up a stream only to prove it a blind alley, for a peculiarity of the Niger is that not a few independent rivers form between the delta branches and have no connections with the Niger itself. Most of the delta is a network, difficult to enter or to retreat from.

All nature is hideous there—the brown waters lazily coursing, the evil odors of the slime and ooze, the repulsive animal life from crocodile to pythons, lurking in the shadow for their prey, and a choice collection of insect plagues, including the anopheles mosquito, with its poisonous sting. These terrible conditions, persisting for about forty miles inland, are then succeeded by solid earth, noble trees and sweet air, but the swamp region of the lower delta is one of the most forbidding parts of Africa.

Richard Lander at last, in 1830, floating down the Niger, was taken by natives into the Nuw branch of the delta and descended it to the sea. The Niger problem was solved.

England gave the Niger a wide berth till after 1850. It was thought to be a plague stricken region from which no good would ever come. Its terrors have fed today before the advance in knowledge. Large vessels ascend the Forcados branch, carrying commerce to and from the far interior of Africa, a Nigeria, a coming empire of industry, with its great cattle, cotton, tin mines and other resources, is joined to the sea both by rail and river.—Cyrus C. Adams in American Review of Reviews.

Diplomacy.
"Pa, what is diplomacy?"
"Diplomacy, my boy, is the art of being disagreeable pleasantly."—Detroit Free Press.

Cleanse the fountain if you would purify the streams.—Alcott.

MANSFIELD AS AN ACTOR.

His Genius Enabled Him to Turn Bad Parts Into Good Ones.

We were to open a new theater in Panton street, which was not ready, so we were transferred to the Royalty. Mansfield was a young man then, about twenty-four, I should say. He was practically unknown. He soon began to shine at rehearsal. His part was that of an old beau. J. G. Taylor was to play a certain waiter. The play was an adaptation from the French. Farnie was the adapter, with no pride of authorship, so he allowed Mansfield a good deal of liberty in the way of interpolation and business. Day by day the part of the old beau was built up, especially in Taylor's scenes, until Mansfield's part assumed the proportions of a leading character and Taylor's part, which was the principal comedy part of the play, faded away into the background. We all began to take notice of Mansfield and to perceive that his character was going to be the part of the play.

One day Taylor rebelled. He told Farnie and Alexander Henderson, the manager of the theater, that he was the leading comedian of the company and that Mansfield's character had now become the most important personage in the comedy. He protested violently. Farnie was in a dilemma. Mansfield's business and additions were so clever and so valuable that he deserved the prominence accorded to him. Taylor was an important actor and could not be dispensed with.

Mansfield came forward. "Would Mr. Taylor like my part?" he said. Taylor felt that, as the principal comedian, the best part belonged properly to him. He ought to have Mansfield's part.

Mansfield handed it to him. "By all means," said he. "Here it is," and he handed over the manuscript covered with interpolations, corrections and business.

We resumed our rehearsals. "You will allow me," said Mansfield to Farnie—"you will allow me the same privilege with this new part you were so generous as to accord me with the other?" Mr. Taylor has the advantage of my suggestions on the other character; you will permit me to do my best with this?"

"By all means," said Farnie, and to work we went again.

Mansfield built up again. Day by day, little by little, his new part absorbed scene after scene.—E. H. Southern in Scribner's.

Made a Costly Mistake.

A big commercial house in the middle west raised the salary of one of its officers to \$40,000 a year.

The officer was greatly pleased. "Now my ambition is satisfied," he said.

Within two years the concern had found a way to dispense with this officer's services. It was done cleverly and smoothly. The man never suspected the real reason why he was released.

The head of the concern had overheard his remark. "We want no men in this business whose ambition is satisfied," he said. "When a man is satisfied, when he ceases to plan and fight for the future, we begin to lose money on him."—Woman's Home Companion.

Why She Made No Outcry.

"You say," said the lawyer, "you heard this man break into your house in the dead of night, and yet you made no effort to call for help?"

"That is so."

"Were you too frightened to call out?"

"No. I was not disturbed a particle. He bumped into the rocker of a chair and swore, so I thought it was my husband."—Detroit Free Press.

The Cheerful Face.

Do not be grumpy in your own home. Some folks save all their smiles for company or special occasions. It is far more necessary to happiness to be cheerful in your own home and with your own family. If the home is happy one can bear rudeness met elsewhere. If the home is happy the happiness will radiate among neighbors and friends.—Milwaukee Journal.

Electricity's Friends and Foes.

Experiments have shown that the best conductors of lightning, placed in the order of conductivity, are metals, gas coke, graphite, solutions of salts, acids and water.

The best nonconductors, ending with the most perfect insulation, are india rubber, gutta percha, dry air and gases, wool, ebonite, silk, glass, wax, sulphur, resins and paraffin.

Renewing Rubber.

Rubber that has lost its elasticity may be rejuvenated, according to the Journal de Pharmacie et de Chimie, by immersing it for five minutes in a bath of glycerin mixed with twenty-five times its volume of distilled water and heated to 70 degrees C. and then drying it with filter paper.

Too Polite.

Little Boy—That lady that talked to me in the park gave me some candy. Mother—I hope you were polite. Little Boy—Yes, ma, I was. Mother—What did you say? Little Boy—I said I wished pa had met her before he got acquainted with you.—Chicago Herald.

Not Facially.

"How do you preserve the paint so wonderfully?"
"I put many coats of varnish over it," explained the artist. "But," he added hastily, "I hardly think that would work in your case, dear lady."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Time works wonders—and so would most people if they were as tireless as time.

DOUBLED THEIR TROUBLE.

Yet Joel's Neighbors Thought They Had Made a Good Bargain.

The shiftless owner of a worthless old horse, Joel Turner, had been in the habit of feeding the animal from the crabs of his more enterprising neighbors until the patience of his victims was completely exhausted. They had caught him in the act of helping himself to corn a number of times, and so there was plenty of evidence to convict him, but on account of his family and his vindictive disposition no one wanted to prosecute him.

One day, when Joel's neighbors were discussing the situation, some one suggested that it would be an act of mercy—which would also solve their problem—if they bought the old horse and put it out of its misery.

This suggestion the conference adopted. They subscribed a purse of \$10 and sent a committee of one to buy the horse.

Here the plan was threatened with failure. The committee reported that Joel did not want to sell.

After a few days Jesse Winfield, who thought himself something of a diplomat, undertook to negotiate the sale and to his surprise found Joel not only willing but anxious to sell the horse.

"That," said Jesse in a congratulatory tone, as he handed over the \$10, "was a good deal for you. You'll let me more good out of the \$10 than you would out of the old horse."

"That's right," assented Joel. "I know where I can buy a team for \$10."—Youth's Companion.

USE OF FRENCH WORDS.

A Critic Scores This Habit of Some Writers of English.

"People who use French in English writing are always those who don't know French very well," John L. Baderston writes in the Atlantic, reporting a conversation with George Moore.

"They use badinage for banter and think there is a shade of difference or I suppose I should say, a nuance of meaning. Then they write resume, which they think more refined than summary, and in society every woman is res raffinee."

"I met an author who had written 'small and petite,' and I asked him why he did it. He said petite can mean dainty as well as small, and I said: 'It cannot. It means nothing but small. But in any case if you wanted to say dainty why didn't you say dainty?'"

"In my newspaper I met with an example of this tendency. A dispatch read something like this: 'The patriotic citizens have been asked to give up their gold ornaments and watches to be melted down into coin unless they are souvenirs.' A man must be without any aesthetic sense whatever to write souvenir when he might have written keepsake. It has associations, that word keepsake. It lives, breathes, runs, jumps, flies. But souvenir in English is a corpse."

A Master of Proportions.

An eager young teacher was reviewing the Sunday school lesson in a mission church in Brooklyn. The subject was Moses and the bush that burned without being consumed. The boys of ten or twelve had been greatly interested in the story and were now eager to expose their knowledge. Answers followed her questions with the rapidity of a machine gun.

"Now, Harry, it's your turn."

"Yessum," was the confident answer.

"Tell me what there was about this burning bush that was different from any bushes that have burned since."

The boy knew—you could tell from the snapping of his eyes—but he paused to formulate his words. "Why, ma'am, you see, this here bush it burned up, but it didn't burn down!" The teacher could not have explained it better herself.—Youth's Companion.

Where Bluebeard Lived.

Most of our readers have heard of Bluebeard, the enterprising gentleman who made a hobby of marriage and had a way of his own for getting rid of superfluous wives. Probably very few people, however, know that the story has any sort of basis in fact. Yet on the banks of the world famous Bosphorus, near Constantinople, there is situated a picturesque old medieval fortress known as "Bluebeard's castle," which is said to have been the abode of a terrible old pasha whose playful little ways gave rise to the story.—Wide World Magazine.

Byron's Deformity.

Lord Byron had a club foot and was acutely conscious of the fact to his last day. Yet he was a fine boxer, having taken lessons from one of the famous "bruisers" of his time. He was also a splendid dancer, and, as everybody knows, he swam the Hellespont, the Dardanelles, in emulation of one of his Greek heroes, Leander.

An Inference.

"Did she say she was going to the drug store?"

"No."

"How do you know she was then?"

"She said she was going out walking for her complexion."—Browning's Magazine.

Fooled.

"The boys were so noisy I thought I'd get an office girl."

"Well?"

"And, by gum, I got one that could whistle!"—Kansas City Journal.

Brief but True.

"What is the surest way to become popular?"
"Mind your own business."—Detroit Free Press.

OLD TIME HARVESTS.

A Reminder of the Days When You Were a Boy on the Farm.

If you were a boy on the farm you will recall vividly what harvest meant to you, for you had to carry water, and harvest hands were a thirsty set, nor did they seem to care how far it was to the spring or how badly chapped your feet.

When not carrying water you were busy gathering sheaves, which was about the hardest work in sight, or at least you thought it was.

When dinner came you would be so hungry that there did not seem to be enough on the table to satisfy you, to say nothing of the hungry bunch. In this you would be somewhat disappointed, for there was always enough for all.

Then for an hour's rest, during which the men would sprawl out in the shade of a tree or on the porch in the greatest comfort. And maybe you would have found a good place to rest your weary bones and about to settle into it when one of the cradlers would come along with a leaky bucket in one hand and a dull scythe in the other and order you to come along and turn the grindstone while you were resting.

Didn't it seem that they had a spite at a boy in harvest time on the farm?—Erasmus Wilson in Pittsburgh Gazette-Times.

TWIN BORDER TOWNS.

They Sit Right on the Line That Separates Us From Mexico.

Along the lengthy frontier separating this country from Mexico, which extends from the Pacific ocean to the gulf, there are seven or eight towns which sit right upon the line.

Half of each of these towns is American, the other half Mexican. Sometimes the Rio Grande cuts them in the two halves, sometimes only a shallow arroyo and sometimes nothing at all but the imaginary mathematical line. These are what I call the twin towns.

El Paso has for its twin Juarez. Douglas has Agua Prieta, Presidio is sister to Ojinaga, Eagle Pass to Piedras Negras, Brownsville to Matamoros, and Laredo, Naco and Nogales. United States, are one with Nuevo Laredo, Naco and Nogales, Mexico.

Usually the American town is larger and of more importance than the Mexican town. It is bigger, more hustling, cleaner, ever so much more enterprising. But the little salamander sister across the way, indolent in the golden dust and the sun, achieves in some mysterious way and without effort a beauty, a color and a grace foreign, perhaps for always, to the big hustler.—James Hopper in Collier's Weekly.

He Met the Note.

Once upon a time a landlady in Washington called on President Andrew Jackson and told of a government clerk who owed her a big bill for board. In those days it was easy to have access to the White House. President Jackson listened to her story and advised her to get a promissory note from the clerk and put it in bank. She replied:

"I've done that twice, general, and he won't pay even then."

"Is that so?" said the president in surprise. "Now, you go and get his note and bring it to me. I simply want to see it, and I'm sure that the clerk will pay that note. Go and bring it to me."

The landlady did so and soon returned with the promissory note. The president turned it over and wrote across the back of it his own indorsement. "A. Jackson."

The note was paid at maturity.

Aptitude.

My observation in life leads me to believe that nearly every human being has an aptitude—that is, there is something that he or she can do better than all other things. One in a hundred, again, has a remarkable aptitude, and in one in a thousand this aptitude is developed into something extraordinary. It then amounts to natural insight and constitutes genius. Now, a perfect system of education, if it could be devised, would be one which, while developing to the fullest extent all the faculties, would allow free play to the special aptitude.—From "The Autobiography of Charles Francis Adams."

Music in Plants.

There is music in plants. The fern leaf of the varieties common here represents a bit of music. From the tip of the fern to the center there is a crescendo, from there to the root there is a diminuendo, and as we reach the last we should have to mark a retard. It is beautiful. Flowers grow rhythmically.—Henry Turner Bailey.

Famous Fables.

"My ancestors came over in the Mayflower."

"This is our family coat of arms."

"Oh, I had plenty of chances to marry, but I preferred to remain single!"

"My kid got off an awfully funny remark yesterday. Listen!"

—New York World.

More Effective.

"I see you've invested in a vacuum cleaner," a neighbor said to Mrs. Jones. "Do you like it better than the old fashioned broom?"

"You bet yer life I do," Mrs. Jones answered. "I kin knock Jones twice as fur with it."—Exchange.

Something in His Favor.

"There's one thing I will say for that fellow whose mistakes cause so much trouble."

"What is it?"
"He doesn't claim that his intentions were good anyhow."—Detroit Free Press.

MRS. ANNIE HOWE

HAS PASSED AWAY

President's Sister Dies at New London, Conn. Funeral in Columbia.

The State.

Mrs. Annie Howe of Philadelphia, sister of President Wilson and wife of the late George Howe, M. D., of Columbia, died early yesterday at a summer hotel in New London, Conn., after several weeks of illness with complicated peritonitis.

The president and Mrs. Wilson will attend the funeral services, which will be held in the First Presbyterian church of Columbia tomorrow, on the arrival of a Seaboard Air Line train from the North, which is due at 11:35 a. m.

The funeral party will proceed directly from the Seaboard station at Gervais and Lincoln streets to the church, at Lady and Marion streets. A brief service will be conducted by the pastor, the Rev. A. W. Blackwood, with the assistance of the Rev. Thornton Whaling, D. D., president of Columbia seminary. Interment will be made in the family plot at the center of the churchyard. The committal service, which will be private, will be brief and simple.

Leaves Three Children.

The president is at his summer residence, Shadow Lawn, in Long Branch. He will join the funeral party this afternoon at Trenton, N. J. Mrs. Wilson, Dr. Cary T. Grayson and six secret service men will probably be the only other persons in his private car. The family group coming from New London comprises Joseph R. Wilson of Baltimore, Mrs. Howe's brother; George Howe of Chapel Hill, N. C., and Wilson Howe of Richmond, her sons, with their wives, and Mrs. Annie Howe Cothran, the only daughter, with her five year old daughter, Josephine. George Howe is professor of Latin at the University of North Carolina. Wilson Howe is an officer of the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad. Mrs. Cothran is the wife of a Raleigh attorney, Perrin Cothran, formerly of Abbeville in this State. Miss Margaret Wilson, the president's daughter, who has been Mrs. Howe's companion during the whole of her residence this summer at New London, is not expected to attend the funeral.

President Wilson has intimated to friends in Columbia, to whom the making of arrangements for the funeral was intrusted, that it will accord with his late sister's desires and his own if no official cognizance be taken of the occasion. He comes not as president but as a bereft brother, returning to his old home to bury his only sister. Honors which would otherwise be paid him will therefore be omitted out of deference to his preferences and those of the family.

The funeral party after the interment will proceed some to the private cars parked at the Seaboard station, others probably to apartments which have been reserved at the Jefferson hotel. Most of those expected have undergone severe and continuous strain during the long period in which Mrs. Howe lingered in a critical condition. They will leave Columbia at 6:15 o'clock tomorrow evening via the Seaboard Air Line.

Flowers will be sent to the church Monday morning between the hours of 9 and 11.

The following have been invited to serve as pallbearers: James Wood-

row, Douglas McKay, McDavid Horton, James H. Taylor, M. D., Reed Smith and Joseph Hyde Pratt. Dr. Pratt is colleague of George Howe in the faculty of the North Carolina State University. He will join the party in Raleigh tomorrow morning.

Rests Beside Husband.

Mrs. Howe will rest beside her late husband, the "beloved physician" of Columbia, who died April 20, 1895. The same modest shaft which marks his grave will indicate hers also. But a few feet away and in the same railed inclosure are the graves of her father and mother, the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Ruggles Wilson. Nearby reposes her late husband's father, the writer and theologian, George Howe. Mrs. Howe's little daughter, Jessie Woodrow Howe, born October 30, 1878, who died January 30, 1885, is buried in the family plot. The inclosure is in the center of the walled churchyard, on the north side of the walk which connects the Marion street gate with that giving on Bull street. The elder George Howe was many years a teacher in the Columbia seminary.

Dr. and Mrs. Howe lived for many years at 1531 Blanding street, diagonally opposite Columbia seminary, and the dwelling is still known as "the Howe house." The nearest surviving relative in Columbia of Mrs. Howe is an aunt, the venerable Mrs. Felie B. Woodrow.

Wilson Cancels All Arrangements for Speaking and Hurries to Sister's Funeral.

Long Branch, N. J., Sept. 16.—Cancelling all political engagements for the first part of next week, President Wilson today made plans for leaving for Columbia tomorrow afternoon to attend the funeral of his sister, Mrs. Annie Howe, who died this morning at New London, Conn.

The president had planned to speak in St. Louis (Wednesday) before an underwriter's convention. He arranged for Secretary Baker to take his place. He also had a number of political engagements Monday. News of Mrs. Howe's death reached the president while he was at breakfast. He was greatly shocked, although he was told several days ago while at New London that it was impossible for her to live. He had planned to return to New London before her death.

Accompanied by Mrs. Wilson and Dr. C. T. Grayson, the White House physician, the president will motor to Trenton, N. J., tomorrow afternoon and at 4:56 p. m., will join his brother, Joseph R. Wilson of Baltimore; his daughter, Miss Margaret Wilson, and several other relatives, who will go with Mrs. Howe's body to Columbia. The funeral party will arrive at Columbia Monday morning at 11:30 o'clock and the funeral will be held soon after the arrival of the train. Mr. Wilson will leave there at 6:15 o'clock Monday afternoon, arriving back here at 1:10 Tuesday afternoon. The president has an engagement to speak in Baltimore September 25 before the National Grain Dealers' association and expects to fill it. Tentative arrangements for speeches in his porch campaign here will be held up until after his return from Columbia.

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